



GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

- (1) **LOCATION** 1.1. Himachal Pradesh is situated between $30^{\circ} 22' 40''$ to $33^{\circ} 12' 20''$ north latitudes and $75^{\circ} 45' 55''$ to $79^{\circ} 04' 20''$ east longitudes.
- (2) The altitude in the Pradesh, a wholly mountainous region in the lap of Himalayas, ranges from 350 meters to 7000 meters above mean sea level
- (3) . It is surrounded by Jammu and Kashmir in the north, Tibet on north east, Uttaranchal in the east/south east; Haryana in south and Punjab in south west/west.
- (4)
- (5) Besides the seasonal variations, the climate of Himachal Pradesh varies at different altitudes. The average rainfall is 152 cms. (60 inches). The highest rainfall occurs in Kangra district followed by Shimla district.

(6) **FORESTS** 3.1 Forests are an important resource of Himachal Pradesh. Although the area classified as "Area under Forest" is 67 percent of the total area of the Pradesh, yet the effective forest cover is much lower than this area, primarily on

account of the fact that a very large area is either alpine meadows or is above the tree line.

(7) . Current scenario is described here: -

(8) Geographical area of the State 55,673 -

(9) Area required under forest cover as per NFP 1988 37,115 Total culturable area under recorded forests is 20657 sq.km. For the purposes of policy requirements unculturable area forming vital eco-system and wildlife habitats shall also have to be considered.

(10) Forest area as per forest record 37,033 sq km

(11) Unculturable area 16,376 Includes under snow cover, permanent high altitude pastures, Rocky Mountains and above tree line (unfit for tree growth). (Area in Sq. Km.)

(12) Culturable Area 20,657

(13) . Very Dense Forest 1,093 Requires protection.

(14) Moderately Dense Forest 7,883 Requires protection improvement in density.

(15) Open Forest 5,377 Requires protection improvement in density.

(16) Balance Culturable Area 6,304 Includes scrub, blank areas and areas covered by plantations, which are not picked up in the satellite imagery (say post 1980 plantations).

(17) Plantations (Post 1980 till 2000-05) 6,557 Assumed to be fully surviving and left out of the satellite imagery.

(18) . Area under Scrubs 389 sq. km Requires conversion into useful forests.

(19) Area under management with the Forest Department.
37,033 sq km

(20) Area under alpine pasture including under permanent snow 16,376

(21) As per latest State Forest Report of FSI, an area of 14,353 sq. km. is actual forest cover. This is constituted by 1,093 sq. km. of very dense forests, 7,883 sq. km. moderately dense and 5,377 sq. km. with open forests. In addition to this, 389 sq. km. area has been described as scrubs.

(22) Forest wealth of Himachal Pradesh is estimated at over Rs. 1,00,000 crore.

. RIVERS AND LAKES

- The origination of the river Beas comes from the Pir Panjal Range which is close to the Rohtang Pass and then the river traverses a path of about 256 Km in the state. The majestic river is formed by a several number of tributaries, of which the major ones are the Hurla, the Parbati, the Uhl, the Sainj, the Luni, the Chaki, the Suheti and the Banganga. The eastern and northern tributaries of the Beas River are perennial, thus snow fed, while the southern tributaries are seasonal and dependent on rainfall. Usually during the August and September, there may be some incidents of flooding with the increased inflow.
- The Chenab or Chandrabhaga or Askni as per Vedas, the most voluminous of all the rivers, is originated after the amalgamation of two streams of water namely, Bhaga and Chandra at Tundi, Lahul. In its circuitous 122 km route it covers a catchment area of about 7,500 km², in Himachal Pradesh, before entering Jammu and Kashmir. The Chandra flows through infertile tribal terrain.
- The River Ravi is originated in Bara Banghal in district Kangra, Himachal Pradesh, as a joint tributary created by the glacier fed Tantgari and Bhadal. The 158 km long river has a catchment region of almost 5,451 sq. km. The right bank of the river is shared by the Chamba.
- The Sutlej, takes birth in extreme north of Tibet, cutting through the great Himalayan as well as the Zaskar ranges to cross the border of India and Tibetan that is near Shipkila.

Sutlej joins the Spiti River in the north. At Bhakra, Sutlej River finally comes out from the mountains, after passing through a number of gorges. Total catchment area of Sutlej River is about 20,000 Sq. km in Himachal Pradesh.

- The famous Yamuna River originates from Yamunotri in the Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand and has a catchment area of about 2,320 Sq. km in Himachal Pradesh. The river has 3 tributaries namely the Giri, the Tons and the Bata.

(23) Some of the important natural lakes worth mentioning are Khajjiar, Ghadasasu Lamba Dal, Manimahesh, Mahakali in Chamba Distt.

(24) Dal, Kareri in Kangra Distt.

(25) Rewalsar, Kumarwah, Prashar in Mandi district

(26) Bhrigu and Dashahr in Kullu Distt.

(27) Chandratal and Surajtal in Lahaul & Spiti Distt.

(28) Chandra Naun in Shimla district; and Renuka in Sirmaur Distt.

(29) The manmade lakes include Gobind Sagar in Bilaspur district; Pong lake in Kangra district; Pandoh lake in Mandi district; and Chamera lake in Chamba district.

(30) LS HAS HIGHEST FOREST AREA

(31) HAMIPUR HAS LOWEST FOREST AREA

(32) LOWEST FOREST COVER IN WHICH DISTT LAHUL SPITI

(33) HIGHEST FOREST COVER IN WHICH DISTT CHAMBA

(34) HIGHEST FOREST (AREA WISE) SIRMAUR

(35) **MINERAL WEALTH** Himachal Pradesh is blessed with mineral wealth. As per investigation of Geological Survey of India, the minerals available in Himachal Pradesh include limestone, barites, clays, mica, iron pyrites, salt, gypsum, slate, antimony and lead.

(36) The distribution of these minerals is scattered all over the State and includes lime stone in Bilaspur, Sirmaur and Kangra districts;

(37) salt and slates in Mandi District;

(38) Gypsum in Rajban, Bharli Sirmour distt. Lahaul & Spiti and Sapatu in Solan distt.

(39) barite in Sirmour,

(40) iron ore in Mandi and Kangra;

(41) uranium in Kullu and Hamirpur districts.

(42) **SOILS** The soils of the State can broadly be divided into nine groups on the basis of their development and physico-chemical properties. These are: (i) **alluvial soils**,

(43) (ii) brown hill soil,

(44) (iii) brown earth,

(45) (iv) brown forests soils,

(46) (v) grey wooded or podzolic soils,

(47) (vi) grey brown podzolic soils,

(48) (vii) planosolic soils,

(49) (viii) humus and iron podzols

(50) (ix) Alpine humus mountain speletal soils.

(51) The soil found in the districts of Mandi, Kangra, Bilaspur, Una, Solan, Hamirpur and Sirmaur is generally brown, alluvial and grey brown podzolic,

(52) Kullu and Shimla have greywooded podzolic soils

(53) while Kinnaur, Lahaul and Spiti and some parts of Chamba district have humus mountain speletal soils.

National Parks in Himachal Pradesh

- Great Himalayan National Park
- Pin Valley National Park
- Inderkilla National Park
- Khirganga National Park
- Simbalbara National Park

UNESCO Heritage Sites

- Great Himalayan National Park -kullu
- Mountain Railways Kalka – Shimla
-

RAMSAR SITES OF HP

1. CHANDAR TAL LAKE
2. PONG LAKE

Important about Glaciers in Himachal Pradesh:

- 1. Bara Shigri:** Bara Shigri glacier is the largest glacier in the famous Chandra Valley of Lahaul Spiti and it is very difficult to track on. It is about 3kms. wide and 25 km.long.
- 2. Chandra :** Chandra glacier is responsible for forming Chandertal lake and has been separated from Bara Shigri glacier.
- 3. The Lady of Keylong:** Situated at an altitude of about 6061mt. in Keylong, Lahaul Spiti.
- 4. Bhadal:** Bhadal glacier is SOURCE OF RAVI RIVER

IMPORTANT ABOUT PASSES IN HP

PRANGLA PASS IS HIGHEST IN HP